

Forestry Incentives Program (FIP)

FACT SHEET

MONTANA

The 1996 Farm Bill extends the Forestry Incentives Program (FIP), which was originally authorized in 1978 to share up to 65 percent of the costs of tree planting, timber stand improvements, and related practices on nonindustrial private forest lands. FIP's forest maintenance and reforestation provide numerous natural resource benefits, including reduced wind and soil erosion and enhanced water quality and wildlife habitat as well as helping to assure a reliable future supply of timber. Improving timber stands, which help to sequester greenhouse gases, also contributes to the President's Climate Change initiative. FIP is administered by the U.S. Department of Agriculture's (USDA) Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) and Forest Service.

Program Availability

FIP is a nationwide program available in counties capable of sites producing at least 50 cubic feet of wood per acre per year. Federal cost-share money is available with a limit of \$10,000 per person per year with the stipulation that no more than 65 percent of the cost may be paid. To find out if your county participates in FIP, check with your local USDA NRCS office.

FIP - Preparing to Meet the Demand

FIP is intended to assure the Nation's ability to meet future demand for sawtimber, pulpwood, and quality hardwoods by planting more trees and placing more forest land under good forest management. FIP's cost sharing for these measures helps eligible private landowners, whose small parcels represent the majority of the Nation's forest lands.

To be eligible for cost-share assistance under FIP, a landowner must:

- Own no more than 1,000 acres of eligible forest land. In the public interest, the NRCS State Conservationist can grant an exception for larger acreages;
- Be a private landowner of a nonindustrial forest. Individuals, groups, associations, or corporations whose stocks are not publicly traded may be eligible for FIP provided they are not primarily engaged in the business of manufacturing forest products or providing public utility services;
- Have land that is suitable for conversion from nonforest land into forest land (afforestation); for reforestation; or for improved forest management; and
- Have land that is capable of producing marketable timber crops and meets minimum productivity standards established for FIP. At least 10 acres of eligible forest land is required for FIP.

Available practices under FIP are:

- Tree planting;
- Improving a stand of forest trees; and
- Site preparation for natural regeneration.

Cost sharing may pay up to 75 percent of the costs of certain conservation practices,

For More Information

Additional information is available from NRCS, Forest Service, FSA, the Cooperative Extension Service, State forestry agencies, or your local conservation district. Your local USDA Service Center is listed in the telephone book under U.S. Department of Agriculture. Information is also available on NRCS's World Wide Web site

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